

NDG&F March 10th Newsletter

Spring Turkey Drawing Held, Licenses Remain

The 2014 spring wild turkey lottery has been held and hopeful hunters can check individual results by accessing the North Dakota Game and Fish Department website at gf.nd.gov.

More than 600 licenses remain in 11 units. The governor's proclamation allows a maximum of two licenses, and hunters who did not apply in the first drawing are also eligible.

Licenses remain in unit 06, Bowman County; unit 13, Dunn County; unit 19, Grant and Sioux counties and portions of Morton County; unit 25 McHenry County and portions of Pierce and Ward Counties; unit 31, Mountrail County; unit 40, Rolette County and portions of Bottineau, Renville, and Pierce counties; unit 44, Slope County; unit 45, Stark County; unit 47, Eddy, Foster, Kidder, Sheridan, Stutsman and Wells counties; unit 51, Burke County and portions of Renville, Bottineau and Ward counties; and unit 99, Mercer and Oliver counties.

Licenses are issued on a first-come, first-served basis beginning March 19. Applicants can apply online, or print an application to mail at the Game and Fish website. In addition, applications can be requested by calling (701) 328-6300. Only North Dakota residents are eligible to apply.

The spring turkey season opens April 12 and continues through May 18.

Bluebird and Tree Swallow Workshop in Bismarck

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department will host a bluebird and tree swallow educational workshop April 14 at the department's main office in Bismarck. The 45-minute presentation is free and begins at 7 p.m.

Outreach supervisor Chris Grondahl said participants will learn about bluebird and tree swallow nest box placement, maintenance and biology. "Even though bluebirds require open spaces and cavities in dead or dying trees, nest boxes can help take the place of natural habitat where it is not available," he said. While all homeowners are invited to attend, the workshop is geared toward individuals who own acreage outside city limits. "Nest boxes in town can actually become nest sites for nonnative and nuisance house sparrows," Grondahl said.

Attendees with adequate habitat for bluebirds will receive free nest boxes to place on their property.

Youth Grant Program Application Deadline

Wildlife, shooting, fraternal and nonprofit civil organizations are urged to submit an application for the Encouraging Tomorrow's Hunters program, a State Game and Fish Department grant program developed to assist recruitment of the next generation of hunters and shooters.

Outreach biologist Pat Lothspeich said the intent is to introduce youngsters to a positive shooting or hunting experience. "Hopefully this will increase the chance that young people will continue to participate in these activities in the future," Lothspeich said.

The maximum grant allowed is \$3,000. The program currently helps fund approximately 40 club and organizational events and projects, with an average grant of \$1,550.

Grant funds help cover event expenses, including promotional printing; event memorabilia such as shirts, caps or vests; ammunition and targets, and eye and ear protection.

Past funding has enabled several groups to conduct youth pheasant and waterfowl hunts, while others have sponsored trap and other shooting events, including archery and rifle shooting.

Any club or organization interested in conducting a [youth hunting or shooting event](#) can get more information, including a grant application, from the Game and Fish Department website, gf.nd.gov, or by contacting outreach biologist Pat Lothspeich at (701) 328-6332.

The deadline to apply for a 2014 grant is April 19.

Bighorn Sheep, Elk and Moose Seasons Set

North Dakota's 2014 bighorn sheep, elk and moose proclamation is finalized and most season information is the same as last year.

The bighorn sheep season will have five licenses available, one more than last year. Licenses in Unit B1 increased from one to two due to skewed male-female ratios caused by declining numbers of females. Unit B2, which was created to prevent overharvest of Sully Creek rams, has been immersed into B1 due to low numbers in the area. Similar to last year, collared rams may not be harvested in Unit B3. The season length has been extended to two months, and the new opening date corresponds with the peak of the rut to improve prospects of finding mature rams.

A total of 261 elk licenses are available to hunters this fall, the same as in 2013. A total of 937 elk – including 701 adult cows – were taken out of the South Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park during the National Park Service's reduction effort from 2010-2012. In addition, an estimated 363 elk were taken by licensed hunters in E3 and E4, reducing the number of elk in the park to below 200. Therefore, the number of elk licenses in units E3 and E4 will remain the same as last year.

A total of 111 moose licenses are available in 2014, the same as last year. Hunting units M1C and M4 will remain closed due to a continued downward trend in moose numbers in the northeastern part of the state.

Online applications are available by visiting the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's website, gf.nd.gov. Paper applications will be available on the website for printing, and at license vendors the week of March 10. The deadline for applying is March 26.

The application fee for moose, elk and bighorn sheep has increased from \$3 to \$5 for each species, as part of the license fee increase bill passed by the 2013 state legislature. For those who are fortunate enough to draw a license, the fee has increased from \$20 to \$30.

Bighorn sheep, moose and elk lottery licenses are issued as once-in-a-lifetime licenses in North Dakota. Hunters who have received a license through the lottery in the past are not eligible to apply for that species again.